



# NMCPHC QUICK HITS

## Holiday Stress Management

With family gatherings and special events, the holiday season can be a time for catching up and celebrating with friends and family. It can also be a stressful and demanding time for Sailors, Marines, and their families. Using positive coping skills can help you navigate difficult situations and maintain your psychological and emotional well-being during the holidays.

- **Set realistic expectations.** There may be circumstances that impact your regular holiday plans and traditions such as a deployment or change in duty station. Acknowledging that the holidays may be different this year and keeping a positive outlook can be helpful in maintaining your well-being during the holidays.
- **Participate in your community.** Connect and participate in activities with others. It not only makes you feel good, but it can also build your confidence and can help motivate you to identify solutions to difficult situations. Find ways to volunteer alongside your colleagues, your family, and your community during the holiday season.
- **Stay active.** Carve out time for physical activity instead of putting it on hold. It will give you more energy, help burn off those holiday calories, and most importantly lessen holiday tension. Take a short walk after a meal to have a few minutes to yourself or catch up with one relative and come back to the gathering refreshed. Try exercising early in the morning before everyone is awake or encourage your family to hike or participate in a fun run during the holidays.
- **Ask for help.** To prevent becoming overwhelmed and to help address any challenges, ask for help from others to help you cope with stress in a healthy way. Talk to a trusted friend or family member, a chaplain, or a health care provider. You can also contact [Military OneSource](#) or your local Fleet and Family Support Center.
- **Deployment Do's.** Your holiday traditions may not be what you're used to if you or a close family member is deployed.
  - Encourage family members to express missing their spouse, parent, child, or sibling. Communicate with the family members at home to find ways to include the deployed service member, such as sending letters, crafts, or videos. Check out [deployment resources](#) developed in a collaboration between the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE) and the Sesame Workshop to help military families cope with the stresses of separation.
  - If you are deployed, get in the holiday spirit by contributing to a command event or encourage your unit to share holiday traditions. As you are able, communicate with your family at home and discuss ways to keep the family connected through the holiday season.



Photo By: Cpl. John Robbatt III

For more information, visit the NMCPHC Health Promotion and Wellness Department's [Psychological and Emotional Well-Being Web page](#).

